THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) The stock position of foodgrains (wheat and rice) as on 31st October, 1994 in the Central Pool was 304.16 lakh tonnes (provisional).

(b) and (c) The stocks of foodgrains (wheat & rice) in the Central Pool, at present continue to be comfortable and are far in excess of minimum buffer norms prescribed. The stocks of foodgrains in the Central Pool, are built up by procurement of wheat and paddy from the farmers and levy rice from the millers/traders. The procurement of wheat and paddy from the farmers under the price support operation, is done at Minimum Support Prices at which the farmers sell wheat and paddy to the Government/its agencies. They are free to sell their foodgrains in the open market if they get higher prices. It is compulsory for the Government to producer foodgrains of FAO offered by the farmers but is voluntary for the farmers to sell the foodgrains to the Government. Hence the buffer stock in the Central Pool automatically increases/decreases depending upon the quantity of foodgrains procured under the price support operation from year to year.

Anticipated Shortfall in Sugar

1531. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) what was the anticipated shortfall in the sugar output in November, 1993.

(b) whether any proposal was mooted for the import of one million tonne of sugar ;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that drastic reduction in the monthly release of sugar both on the PDS and free sale accounts was made and if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) :

(a) The Sugar production during the month of November, 1993 was 8.94 lakh tonnes as against 7.72 lakh tonnes in November, 1992.

(b) and (c) Keeping in view the likely low level of sugar production during the 1993-94 season, various options including import of sugar, to meet the requirements of the public Distribution system were considered.

(d) The allocation of levy sugar quota of 3.35 lakh tonnes per Month ensuring for most of the States/UTs minimum per capita availability of 425 gms for the projected population as on 1-10-1986 was continued during 1993-94 season. However, ad-hoc allocation of 5% in the levy quota of all States/UTs allowed since August, 1991 was discontinued from the month of April, 1994. Keeping in view the decline in sugar production during 1993-94 sugar season the release of free sale sugar has been regulated judiciously. The sugar production which reached a record high of 134.11 lakh tonnes in 1991-92 season, declined on 106.09 lakh tonne during 1992-93 season and was about 98.12 (provisional) lakh tonnes during 1993-94 season.

Recommendation For Issuance of Sugar Licences

1532. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry had made certain recommendations to the Licensing Committee for the issuance of sugar licences during the current year ;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof stating the criteria for recommending the issuance of sugar licences; and

(c) what are the details of the recommendations accepted by the Licensing committee ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) Ministry of Food has not made any recommendations to the licensing Committee for the issuance of sugar licences for setting up of new sugar factories during the current sugar year 1994-95 (October-September).

(b) & (c) : Does not arise

Newspaper Report on Levy-Free Ration

1533. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in the Hindustan Times dated 22nd November, 1994 captioned "Current Levy Free ration for Sugar favoured".

(b) if so, what is the present stock of imported sugar for 1994-95 season available for utilisation for Public Distribution System, leaving scope to carry forward 7-8 lakh tonnes for the next crushing season ;